

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 00123 211042Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 PRS-01 /021 W

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R 191309Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 703

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0123

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FOR EUR/EE CARROLL BROWN FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, BU

SUBJECT: PLOVDIV 76

REF: (A) STATE 7942; (B) USDOC 549; (C) SOFIA 0119;

(D) SOFIA 2768; (E) SOFIA A-94, 10/1/75

1. ONCE AGAIN I MUST CALL ON YOU FOR DIPLOMATIC ASSISTANCE IN WORKING FOR AN EFFECTIVE US EXHIBIT AT PLOVDIV IN 1976. AS YOU WILL SEE FROM REF C, WE FIND REF A A DEEPLY DISTURBING MESSAGE. READING BETWEEN THE LINES OF WHAT IS A RATHER CARPING AND IN MANY WAYS TENDENTIOUS MESSAGE, IT APPEARS THAT USDOC, DESPITE THEIR HAVING ACCEPTED THE LEAD ROLE, IN REALITY IS FAR FROM COMMITTED TO DOING WHAT IS NECESSARY AND, INDEED, PROBABLY HAS NOT EVEN BEGUN RECRUITING EXHIBITORS. INSTEAD OF REPLYING TO THE SUBSTANTIVE POINTS RAISED IN THE STREAM OF EMBASSY MESSAGES ON PLOVDIV--AND PARTICULARLY REFS D AND E-- USDOC CONCENTRATES ON THE COMPLAINTS OF THREE OF LAST YEAR'S EXHIBITORS, SOME OF WHICH THE COMPLAINERS THEMSELVES ACKNOWLEDGED WERE MINOR.

2. TO YOU WE HARDLY NEED EMPHASIZE THE COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE OF PLOVDIV; THE DOLLAR VOLUME PROJECTED AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATION THESE PAST TWO YEARS SHOULD
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SPEAK FOR ITSELF. OUR REPORTING ON ECONOMIC PLANS AND

THE GREAT EMPHASIS THEREIN ON NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ON THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY SHOULD BE AMPLE INDICATION OF THE POTENTIAL BUSINESS TO WHICH THIS YEAR'S FAIR CAN LEAD. BUT APPARENTLY THE PERSON CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY IN COMMERCE, THE VERY AGENCY THAT SHOULD BE MOST INTERESTED, IS DRAGGING HIS FEET. YOU WILL RECALL THAT WE HAD THE SAME PROBLEM TWO YEARS AGO WHEN IT TOOK PERSONAL INTERVENTION BY SECRETARY DENT TO GET THINGS INTO SHAPE.

3. ESSENTIALLY, WHAT WE NEED IS SOMEONE AT STATE WHO WILL TRY TO KEEP COMMERCE HEADED IN THE DIRECTION IT SHOULD BE GOING. FOR OPENERS, THEY HAVE YET TO REPLY TO THE SUBSTANTIVE POINTS IN REFS D AND E; THEY HAVE APPARENTLY NOT YET BEGUN A SERIOUS EFFORT AT RECRUITING; AND ALTHOUGH THEY HAD MONEY TO SEND A JUNIOR DESK OFFICER ON A SIGHT-SEEING TRIP THROUGH EASTERN EUROPE, SOMEHOW (REF B) THEY LACK THE FUNDS TO SEND A RECRUITER HERE (AND TO VIENNA FOR TALKS WITH EWTDO). THE REFUSAL TO TAKE PAVILION 24 WOULD MEAN THERE WOULD BE JUST ABOUT AS MUCH ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE (FOR OFFICES, LOUNGE, TOILETS AND STORAGE) AS EXHIBITION SPACE. YOU WILL RECALL THAT WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH THIS ONE ALSO WITH PREVIOUS PLOVDIV FAIRS.

4. ESSENTIALLY, I THINK, WE ARE UP AGAINST THE "LOWER SLOBOVIA SYNDROME", SOME PEOPLE JUST CAN'T GET THEMSELVES AND OTHERS TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT BULGARIA. IF THE RECRUITER CANNOT ACT FROM CONVICTION HE WILL DO ONLY HALF A JOB. BUT HALF-HEARTED EFFORTS BY COMMERCE CAN LEAD ONLY TO A SHOW WHICH IS EVEN LESS THAN HALF GOOD. IT WOULD NOWHERE NEAR TAP THE BUSINESS POTENTIAL THAT EXISTS AND WOULD BE A ROTTEN ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE US. WE REALLY MUST NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN, AND TOWARD THAT END I ASK YOUR PERSONAL ASSISTANCE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SOFIA00123
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760022-0709
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760144/aaaabmsx.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 76 STATE 7942, 76 SOFIA 119
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <25 MAR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PLOVDIV 76
TAGS: BEXP, BU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006